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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4781
INFO RUMJPG/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 631
RUFHEB/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 28
RUSJGD/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 9833
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1753
RUSBAE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 7091
RUEHHR/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN 335
BT
SECRET KABUL 5478

EXDIS

C.O. 12063: RDS-1 7/19/99 (FLATIN, BRUCE A.) OR-M
TAGS: PINT, PINS, PINR, AF, GE, US
SUBJECT: (S) FURTHER COMMENTS BY EAST GERMAN AMBASSADOR ABOUT
SOVIET EFFORTS TO ALTER AFGHAN REGIME

REF: KABUL 5459

1. (S - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SUMMARY: EAST GERMAN AMBASSADOR SCHWIESAU HAS IDENTIFIED
CERTAIN NON-PUSHTUN CABINET MINISTERS AS BEING IN SUPPORT OF
CURRENT SOVIET MACHINATIONS TO ALTER THE AFGHAN REGIME.
SCHWIESAU THINKS IT MIGHT BE TOO LATE TO ACHIEVE A POLITICAL
SOLUTION TO THE PRESENT MESS IN AFGHANISTAN. END OF SUMMARY.

3. DURING A CONVERSATION WITH THE A/DCM AT A SOCIAL
EVENT ON JULY 18, DR. HERMANN SCHWIESAU, AMBASSADOR OF THE
GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, EXPANDED SOMEWHAT ON THE
PRESENTATION HE MADE TO CHARGE AMSTUTZ ON JULY 17
CONCERNING CURRENT SOVIET EFFORTS TO RESTRUCTURE THE
AFGHAN REGIME (REFTEL). SCHWIESAU EXERCISED CARE TO
CONVEY HIS VIEWS ONLY TO THE AMERICAN OFFICER, CHANGING
THE TOPIC OF CONVERSATION WHEN THE BRITISH AND JAPANESE
AMBASSADORS JOINED THE GROUP.

19 JUL 1979 112

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4. WHEN ASKED WHETHER HE THOUGHT PRIME MINISTER HAFIZULLAH AMIN, THE PRIMARY TARGET OF THE SOVIET MANEUVERINGS, IS AWARE OF WHAT IS HAPPENING, SCHWIESAU AFFIRMED THAT AMIN IS VERY ALERT TO DEVELOPMENTS, BUT PROBABLY NOT AWARE OF EVERYTHING THAT HAS OCCURRED DURING THE PAST WEEK, WHEN THE SOVIET EFFORT HAS MOVED INTO A MORE ACTIVE PHASE. WHEN ASKED WHETHER AMIN WOULD ACCEPT HIS FATE QUIETLY OR FIGHT, SCHWIESAU REPLIED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW.

5. AS MEMBERS OF THE ANTI-AMIN ALIGNMENT, SCHWIESAU IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING MINISTERS, NOTING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FACT THAT ALL ARE NON-PUSHTUN: FINANCE MINISTER ABDUL KARIM HISAQ, A HAZARA; JUSTICE MINISTER ABDUL NAKIM SHARAFI JAUZJANI, AN UZBEK; PUBLIC WORKS MINISTER DASTAGIR PANJSHIRI, A TAJIK; AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND CULTURE BAREQ-SHAPEYE, A TAJIK. (HE DID NOT MENTION OTHER NON-PUSHTUNS, LIKE MINISTER OF COMMERCE ABDUL QUDUS GHORBANDI, A TAJIK, OR MINISTER OF MINES AND INDUSTRIES MOHAMMAD ISMAIL DAKESH, A KUZILBASH.) SCHWIESAU IMPLIED THAT AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE CURRENT POLITICAL PROBLEM IS THE EXCESSIVE PUSHTUNIZATION TENDENCIES OF THE CURRENT KHALQI LEADERSHIP.

6. WHEN THE A/DCM OBSERVED THAT IT NOW SEEMED A LITTLE LATE IN THE GAME FOR AN ATTEMPT TO ACHIEVE A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE KHALQI MESS, SCHWIESAU GRAVELY NODDED HIS AGREEMENT. SCHWIESAU FURTHER AGREED THAT A GENUINELY EXPANDED POLITICAL BASE WOULD NOW APPEAR DIFFICULT TO CONSTRUCT SINCE THE KHALQIS SEEM TO HAVE ALIENATED ALMOST EVERY ELEMENT OF AFGHAN SOCIETY.

7. SCHWIESAU WENT ON TO COMPLAIN BITTERLY ABOUT THE RASH INCOMPETENCE OF THE KHALQI LEADERSHIP THAT INEVITABLY LED TO THE CURRENT SITUATION. AS AN EXAMPLE, HE CITED THE CONTROVERSIAL LAND REFORM PROGRAM, WHICH HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR MUCH OF THE OPPOSITION IN THIS COUNTRY. SCHWIESAU RECALLED THAT HE HAD WARNED THE KHALQIS LAST YEAR TO GO SLOW WITH A COMPLICATED PROGRAM OF THIS TYPE, ADVISING THEM THAT THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, "THE MOST ADVANCED SOCIETY IN THE SOCIALIST CAMP," HAD CAREFULLY PHASED ITS LAND-REFORM PROGRAM OVER A FIFTEEN-YEAR PERIOD. SCHWIESAU ADDED GLUMLY THAT THE OVERLY ENTHUSIASTIC KHALQIS REJECTED HIS ADVICE -- AND STATED THEIR CONVICTION THAT THE AFGHAN PEOPLE WOULD SUPPORT THEIR ACCELERATED PROGRAM. AFTER SIX MONTHS, SCHWIESAU OBSERVED, IT WAS CLEAR THAT LAND REFORM WAS A DISASTER. HE RECALLED HOW MANY LANDLESS AND "LAND-POOR" PEASANTS HAD WANTED TO REFUSE TO ACCEPT LAND BECAUSE OF RELIGIOUS SCRUPLES OR FEAR OF FUTURE RETRIBUTION BY THE DEPRIVED LANDLORDS. THE KHALQIS FORCED THEM TO ACCEPT THE LAND, THREATENING THEM WITH IMPRISONMENT IF THEY REFUSED. ACCORDING TO SCHWIESAU, SEVERAL OF THESE PEASANTS LATER COMMITTED SUICIDE.

8. COMMENT: THROUGH SCHWIESAU, THE SOVIETS WOULD SEEM TO BE TRYING TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT WE ARE BEING KEPT "INFORMED" IS /S-

/SS 5313398.3,3 -- FOR WHATEVER PURPOSE THEY HAVE IN MIND. (AN INTERESTING NOTE, INCIDENTALLY, IS THAT SCHWIESAU HAD A LARGE BOUQUET OF FLOWERS DELIVERED CHARGE AMSTUTZ AFTER THEIR JULY 17 MEETING.)

9. THIS EMBASSY REMAINS SKEPTICAL THAT THE SOVIETS WILL BE ABLE TO BROADEN THE POLITICAL BASE OF THE AFGHAN REGIME SUFFICIENTLY TO STILL THE WIDESPREAD INSURRECTION IN AFGHANISTAN. WE FREQUENTLY HEAR RUMORS THAT THE SOVIETS ARE STILL TRYING TO BUILD A NEW REGIME AROUND FORMER ROYALIST PRIME MINISTER YUSUF, WHO WOULD PROBABLY SERVE AS A FIGUREHEAD PERSONAGE. THE LARGE NUMBERS OF AFGHANS WHO HAVE NOW BEEN INCITED TO BLOOD-FEUD ACTION ARE UNLIKELY TO BE FOOLED BY OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLES. ANY SOLUTION INVOLVING THE REPLACEMENT OF KHALQIS BY PARCHANISTS WOULD ALSO BE A LOSER. THE LATTER ARE ALSO REGARDED BY AFGHANS AS PRO-MOSCOW ATHEISTS.

AMSTUTZ

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